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UNIVERSITY RELATIONS • MISSOULA, MT 59812 • 406-243-2522 • FAX: 406-243-4520

NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 3, 1999

Contact: Cathryn Mallory, director, Gallery of Visual Arts, 243-2813.

UM ART GALLERY SHOWCASES SURREALISM, MONTANA-STYLE

MISSOULA--

Two art exhibits on display at The University of Montana invite the public to delve into the world of surrealism and the relationship between society and wilderness. Both shows are free and open to the public.

"Dreaming the West: Surrealism's Legacy in Contemporary Montana" is on exhibit at the Gallery of Visual Arts through Feb. 26. The public is invited to an opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5.

Surrealism, an artistic and literary movement that began in Paris in 1924, has had a profound impact on artistic, academic and popular culture. "Dreaming the West" explores the ways in which the ideas of the surrealist movement have been assimilated, reinterpreted and transformed by three Montana artists -- Robert Royhl, Kathryn Schmidt and Jesse Valentine.

Surrealism's influence on 20th century art is reflected in the diversity of artistic techniques and intellectual concepts embraced by the three artists in this show. Royhl's mixed-media works explore the human psyche through a personal vocabulary of symbolic imagery, while Schmidt's dream-like paintings of deer engaging in human behavior challenge the human relationship with nature. The humorous imagery of Valentine's work references the surrealist interest in visual and verbal puns. Like his surrealist predecessors, Valentine juxtaposes images and words in order to discover the motivations that lurk beneath the surface of everyday life.

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"Dreaming the West" was organized by the Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls. It is traveling under the auspices of the Montana Art Gallery Directors Association (MAGDA), which is supported in part by grants from the Montana Arts Council, the Coal Tax Trust Fund for Cultural and Aesthetic Projects, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Also on display at UM is "Dissociations -- Spirit and Society," featuring artwork by Anthony Lott. The show is open to the public in the University Center Gallery through Feb. 19. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Lott's drawings and paintings explore the relationship between society and wilderness in landscapes and figure paintings.

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